

One of our first priorities in the 111th Congress was to help the American taxpayers. The Making Work Pay tax credit offered a double-shot of assistance. By providing individuals with reductions of up to \$400 on their 2009 taxes and couples up to \$800, we can help people to pay their bills during these economic hard times. Nor did we forget about those collecting Social Security, who receive an additional \$250 this year. That extra spending will also help to stimulate our economy and get it back on track.

In order to get the money to you as quickly and easily as possible, and without requiring you to fill out a host of new forms, the tax credit was effected by changing how much your employer withholds from your paycheck. A simple update of the IRS's tax withholding tables made paychecks across the country a little bigger starting last month.

For most Americans, that's it. You don't have to do anything different. Some people, though, might want to make a few changes. If you have two jobs, for example, both of your employers could return you the \$400 this year. Since every working American is supposed to get the same \$400, something would have to be done about that. For the same reason, if you're collecting Social Security and still working, the combination of your tax refund and your Social Security payment have the same \$400 limit everyone else faces.

You could simply pay the extra back when you file your income taxes and treat the extra \$400 as an interest-free loan from Congress to help you through the year, but remember that your tax refund will be smaller or your tax payment higher. Alternately, you can fill out a new W-4 so that your employers are withholding the right amount. The IRS has a handy [Withholding Calculator](#) on their website that will help you determine how much you want withheld. And remember, these are your taxes, so the choice is up to you.

If your family files joint returns, you can get up to \$800 back, the same \$400 per person. Depending on how you filled out your W-4s, though, your employer might be giving you more that would have to be paid back. Once again, you have the choice of how you want to handle this, and the IRS's [Withholding Calculator](#) can help you decide what works best for you. Some people may even want higher withholding so they get a larger refund when they file their taxes next year.

You can learn more at the IRS website's section on the [Making Work Pay Tax Credit](#). If you decide to fill out a new W-4, [IRS Publication 919](#) will walk you through how to do that.

Our goal with the Making Work Pay Tax Credit was to get your money to you promptly and fairly. Millions of Americans have already gotten some extra help. That's part of our government's responsibility, and something I take very seriously.